



2011 AmeriCorps State Grant Application Request for Proposals

Thank you for your interest in an AmeriCorps State grant. This packet contains information pertaining to the RFP process for 2011 AmeriCorps grants funded by the federal Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) through the Montana Governor's Office of Community Service (OCS). The Montana Commission on Community Service serves as the body to review and recommend funding to the Corporation for National and Community Service.

Funding Purpose: The purpose of these grants is to establish AmeriCorps programs in local communities to help address needs in the key objective areas of education, healthy futures, environmental stewardship, veterans, opportunity, and disaster services. *Note: Key objectives have not yet been finalized by CNCS.*

Applicants should read all application materials, including attachments, and linked documents, prior to submitting any documents to the Governor's Office of Community Service.

Note: this funding process is for 'Competitive' grant applications. 'Formula' grant applications and funding will be announced in the spring of 2011.

Full AmeriCorps State Grant Application Instructions from CNCS:

http://www.americorps.gov/pdf/10_0831_ac_nofa_inst.pdf

NOFA: Notice of Funding Opportunity (**Attachment A**)

In order to be eligible for an AmeriCorps Grant, applicants must complete the following:

1. Letter of Intent. (**Attachment B**)
2. Readiness Self-Assessment survey with the Financial and Administrative Survey *for new programs only*. (**Attachment C**)
3. Send both documents electronically to the Governor's Office of Community Service at serve@mt.gov to be considered for an AmeriCorps Grant.
4. The Governor's Office of Community Service will contact you confirming receipt of your letter of intent and self-assessment. If you do not hear from us within 24 hours please call at 406-444-9077 and confirm your letter of intent and self-assessment arrived.

The Governor's Office of Community Service may ask organizations to continue with the request for proposal (RFP) application. Applicants must then complete the following:

5. The Full AmeriCorps State Grant Application in eGrants using the Application Instructions from CNCS.
6. Submit the Application via eGrants to OCS.
7. Applicants must also complete a cover letter. (**Attachment D**)
8. Send the cover letter electronically to the Governor's Office of Community Service at serve@mt.gov to be considered for an AmeriCorps Grant.
9. The Governor's Office of Community Service will contact you confirming receipt your cover letter and application in eGrants. If you do not hear from us within 24 hours please call at 406-444-9077 and confirm cover letter and application arrived.



2011 AmeriCorps State Grant Application Competitive Timeline

Sept. 2010	2011 AmeriCorps State Grant Application and materials released and posted online
Oct. 13	Letter of Intent (all competitive applicants) and Financial Readiness Survey (new applicants only) due to the Governor's Office of Community Service (OCS) by 5pm
Oct. 20	Technical Assistance Call for applicants- regarding RFP and eGrants
Nov. 3	Applications due in eGrants by 5pm Cover Letter due to the Governor's Office of Community Service by 5pm
Nov. 4-5	OCS Staff reviews applications
Nov. 8	Applications sent to the Grant Review Workgroup of the Montana Commission on Community Service
Nov. 30	In-Person interviews of Selected Applicants with the Grant Review Workgroup and OCS
Dec. 3	Grant Review Workgroup's recommendations sent to the full Commission
Dec. 10	Full Commission Meeting (Video Conference) to vote on funding recommendations
Dec. 15	Applicants Notified of Funding Recommendations and Given Technical Feedback
Jan. 12	Final Revised Applications due in eGrants by 5pm
Jan. 25	Staff Submits State Competitive Applications to the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS)
May/June 2011	CNCS sends out Award Notification of Competitive Funding Status



Attachment A - Notice of Funding Opportunity

Montana Governor's Office of Community Service 2011 AmeriCorps State Grant Application

Who Can Apply?

- Public or private nonprofit organizations
- Community and faith-based organizations
- State and local education institutions
- Indian tribes
- State agencies, cities, counties, and local governments

How to Apply

The Montana AmeriCorps application process begins with the letter of intent and readiness self-assessment survey being sent to the Governor's Office of Community Service.

Once an applicant has submitted the letter of intent and self-assessment the Governor's Office of Community Service may ask those organizations with strong self-assessments, letters of intent, and that meet National and State priorities to complete the RFP application.

As stated on the first page in the application instructions The Governor's Office of Community Service will contact you confirming receipt of your letter of intent and self-assessment, if you do not hear from us within 24 hours please call the Governor's Office of Community Service at 406-444-9077 and confirm your information arrived.

The RFP Application

The RFP application outlines succinctly and precisely the steps to identify a proposed project, the needs it addresses, the activities AmeriCorps Members will be engaged and the number of AmeriCorps Members requested. Applicants also describe their organizational capacity for administering an AmeriCorps program, and identify the source(s) of necessary program support, including a required match.

Overview of AmeriCorps

AmeriCorps is a national service program that provides opportunities for citizens to serve their country in local communities. Local programs design service activities for a team of AmeriCorps Members serving full-time or part-time to join a local program and provide specific, intensive community services such as: tutoring students who need extra help, teaching community residents about issues directly affecting them, and other services to strengthen communities. Members also mobilize community volunteers and strengthen the capacity of the organizations where they serve. Grant awards spans a period of time anywhere from one to three years; all grants are subject to availability of federal funds.



Three year grants are renewed annually and are subject to performance reviews. AmeriCorps is a program funded by the U. S. Congress under the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance number 94.006. The national public/private partnership supporting AmeriCorps is the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS). CNCS receives AmeriCorps program funding from Congress and awards funding to state commissions and organizations, such as the Governor's Office of Community Service, to grant and oversee AmeriCorps programs in their state. On April 21, 2009, President Obama signed into law The Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act, authorizing a dramatic funding increase for AmeriCorps and other volunteer programs. This legislation also establishes a goal of expanding from 75,000 government-supported volunteers to 250,000. With this financial support and a national call to service, there are tremendous opportunities for all Americans to do their part to address unmet needs and help their country. For more information about starting up an AmeriCorps program and/or national AmeriCorps programs, please visit www.americorps.gov or www.nationalservice.gov.

Governor's Office of Community Service

The Governor's Office of Community Service and the Montana Commission on Community Service were established in 1993 by the Montana Legislature to administer grants under the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993. Under the advice from the Montana Commission on Community Service, the Governor's Office of Community Service grants funds to Montana AmeriCorps and National Service programs through a competitive grant process; encourages citizens of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities to engage in service; involves youth in the life and work of communities; promotes volunteerism in emergency management and preparedness; and helps to strengthen and expand volunteer opportunities for all Montanans.

Funding Priorities

In the FY 2011 competition, the Corporation for National and Community Service funding priorities are projects that address compelling, unmet needs as outlined in one or a combination of the following six federal key objectives:

Federal Key Objectives: *Note: These key objectives have not yet been finalized by CNCS.*

- ☐ Education: Improve graduation rates for students and improve grade-level performance
- ☐ Healthy Futures: Improve the health and wellness of individuals in the areas of obesity prevention, aging in place and access to health service
- ☐ Environment Stewardship: Decrease the consumption of fossil fuels



- ☐ Veterans: Increase economic, education, and health opportunities for veterans and military families by leveraging national service, including veterans serving veterans
- ☐ Opportunity: Improve financial stability, access to affordable housing, and employment opportunities for economically vulnerable families
- ☐ Disaster Services: Increase capacity of communities to serve vulnerable populations in the event of a disaster and improve communities in disaster-affected areas

The Montana State Service plan as recommended by the Montana Commission on Community Service has also identified priority areas; therefore additional consideration will be given to programs in Montana that address one or more of the following initiatives and include the following expectations of programs:

Montana Initiatives:

- ☐ The Governor's strategic initiative for clean energy
- ☐ The Governor and First Lady's strategic initiative for math and science education

Montana Expectations of All Programs:

- ☐ Disability inclusion in the design and delivery of the program
- ☐ A collaborative approach to program planning, design and delivery
- ☐ Demonstrated ability to successfully administer an AmeriCorps or other federal grant
- ☐ Addressing rural, underserved or areas of extreme poverty that are not currently served by AmeriCorps programs

AmeriCorps program requirements

Meeting Community Needs

AmeriCorps engages citizens of all ages and backgrounds in helping organizations initiate, improve, or expand services to meet pressing local needs. Service activities must result in a specific, identifiable benefit or improvement that otherwise would not be provided with existing funds or volunteers, and that does not duplicate the routine functions of workers or displace paid employees.

Strengthening communities

Programs must strengthen communities, bringing together both institutions and individuals



to cooperate in effecting lasting and constructive change. This strengthening of communities is evidenced by community involvement in planning and implementation, the development of local partnerships, and the recruitment of volunteers.

Developing AmeriCorps members

Programs must help members develop, through their service experience, the ethic and skills needed for productive, active citizenship. During the term of service, most AmeriCorps members receive a basic stipend; full-time members are eligible for health care and possibly child care benefits. At the end of the term of service, members receive an education award of up to \$5,550 (2011) that can be used for many kinds of education or to pay back student loans. Programs must also provide members with the training and knowledge necessary to perform the task required in their respective projects.

Program Design

Applicants have a great deal of flexibility to design programs that will best achieve the goals listed above. This flexibility includes the ability to target individuals of a certain age or skill level; to involve appropriate partner organizations to train, supervise, or support members; and to place members individually in projects or organize them in teams. Programs may also determine whether a full-time or part-time schedule is more appropriate to the program's goals.

The Montana Commission on Community Service has the following programmatic preference:

Size

AmeriCorps is not designed for programs that may be looking for one or two AmeriCorps members to work on a particular project. Programs must be large enough to achieve a demonstrable impact. In general, programs sponsoring fewer than 10 full-time members or their equivalent (e.g., 20 half-time members) will not be funded. The applicant has the flexibility to determine an appropriate service period (not to exceed 12 months with the exception of 2 year half time member) for members but should limit the number of different categories proposed.

The Montana Commission on Community Service will prioritize those applications that integrate these program preferences. The Montana Commission on Community Service may consider other factors in selecting proposals for funding. Regardless of how well an applicant does, the Montana Commission on Community Service has the ability to select other applications for the purposes of geographic and program diversity. All funding decisions require approval by the executive director of the Governor's Office of Community Service and the Corporation for National and Community Service.



Notice of Federal Funding Opportunity

Federal Agency Name: Corporation for National and Community Service
Funding Opportunity Title: AmeriCorps State and National Grants FY 2011
Announcement Type: Initial announcement
CFDA Number: 94.006

Dates: Applications are due **January 25, 2011** at 5:00 p.m.* Eastern Time. Successful applicants will be notified in June 2011.

Overview: The mission of the Corporation for National and Community Service (the Corporation) is to improve lives, strengthen communities, and foster civic engagement through service and volunteering.

*To qualify for a grant, applicants must submit their application by Nov. 3, 2010 at 5pm in eGrants for review by the Montana Governor's Office of Community Service. Final approved versions must be submitted by Jan. 12, 2011 at 5pm in eGrants.

For more than fifteen years, the Corporation—through its Senior Corps, AmeriCorps, and Learn and Serve America programs—has helped to mobilize a new generation of engaged citizens. This year, more than 1.8 million individuals of all ages and backgrounds will serve with national and community non-profit organizations, faith-based groups, schools, and local agencies to meet needs in education, health, the environment, economic opportunity, veterans, disaster services, and other critical areas.

This *Notice of Federal Funding Opportunity (Notice)* should be read together with the AmeriCorps regulations 45 CFR Sections 2520 – 2550 and the Application Instructions.

This *Notice* will be amended with additional detail on strategic objectives, national performance measures, and the review and selection process in October, 2010.

In addition, the Corporation embraces the Obama Administration's emphasis on open government. In that spirit, we are planning to move toward greater openness and transparency in our grant making processes. We plan to announce a new approach to the release of public information in the amended *Notice*, following grantee discussion on this topic in September.

I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. What is the purpose of AmeriCorps State and National funding?

The Corporation's purpose is to maximize the power of service and volunteering to improve lives in communities across the country. In the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act, Congress directed the Corporation to focus national service on unmet needs that service can impact, including improving education, energy conservation, the health of all Americans, and economic opportunity for economically vulnerable individuals; increasing service by and for veterans; and providing disaster services.

The Corporation is carrying out Congress's intent by targeting AmeriCorps State and National funding in these six focus areas, and is developing strategic objectives for each. This *Notice* is also designed to align AmeriCorps funding with the overarching goals which are shaping the development of the strategic plan. The Corporation intends to:



- direct the power of national service to solve a common set of national challenges,
- expand opportunities to enable all Americans to enlist in community-based efforts that address national challenges,
- embrace innovative solutions that work, and
- build the enduring capacity of individuals, organizations and communities to effectively use service and volunteering to solve community problems.

AmeriCorps State and National grants support the efforts of national and community-based non-profit organizations to recruit and deploy AmeriCorps members and the volunteers with whom they work to tackle unmet needs. AmeriCorps State and National grants will be awarded on a competitive basis to eligible organizations that identify a problem(s) and persuasively demonstrate how deploying AmeriCorps members and community volunteers will produce significant impact.

AmeriCorps members will be recruited, trained, supervised, and managed by the funded organization, and may receive a living allowance and other benefits while serving. Upon successful completion of their service, AmeriCorps members are eligible to receive a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award from the National Service Trust. A community volunteer is an individual who donates his or her service to organizations funded by the Corporation, but who is not an AmeriCorps member.

B. What are the 2011 AmeriCorps State and National funding priorities?

1. Focus Areas, Strategic Objectives, and National Performance Measures

In 2010, the Corporation awarded approximately 80 percent of its AmeriCorps State and National competitive funds to organizations meeting needs in the five priority areas identified in the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act (**Education, Healthy Futures, Clean Energy/Environment, Veterans, and Opportunity**).

In 2011, the Corporation expects to award a similar percentage of available funding to programs working in the focus areas of **Education, Healthy Futures, Clean Energy/Environment, Veterans, Opportunity, and Disaster Services**. Within these focus areas, the Corporation will give additional priority to those applications that propose to meet the Corporation's strategic objectives. These strategic objectives will be included in the amended *Notice*, which will be issued in October following approval of the Corporation's five-year strategic plan. Additional information on the development of the strategic objectives and the strategic plan can be found on the Corporation's website here: http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/focus_areas/index.asp.

In 2011, the Corporation will implement the second year of the National Performance Measures Pilot. National performance measures allow the Corporation to demonstrate the aggregated impact of AmeriCorps programs. While use of national performance measures remains optional in 2011, new and re-competing applicants are strongly encouraged to use them in planning programming. Applications that include national performance measures will be a funding priority in 2011. National performance measures will be described in detail in the amended *Notice* which will be issued in October.

2. New Applicants

The Corporation anticipates that at least 15 percent of the funds described in this *Notice* will support applicants that have not received an AmeriCorps State or National operational grant in the last five years. Applicants that have received only a state or territory commission formula operational grant within the last five years will be considered new for purposes of this 15 percent target.

3. Encore Programs

An encore service program involves a significant number of participants age 55 or older and employs the skills and experience that such participants offer in the design and implementation of the program.



The Corporation anticipates that at least 10 percent of the financial assistance and approved national service positions provided through these grants will be awarded to eligible entities proposing to carry out encore service programs unless the Corporation does not receive a sufficient number of applications of adequate quality to justify making that percentage available to those eligible entities.

4. Special Consideration

Additional programs and program models that may receive special consideration in the selection process are described in the AmeriCorps regulations at 45 CFR §§ 2522.450 and 2522.470 and reflected in the selection factors described the amended *Notice*.

II. AWARD INFORMATION

A. How much funding is available?

Subject to the availability of appropriations for fiscal year 2011, the Corporation anticipates availability of approximately \$311 million to award new, re-competing, and continuation AmeriCorps State and National grants. Note that this amount of funding coupled with high demand as indicated in last year's funding cycle will result in a high degree of competition for these funds.

B. What organizations are eligible for funding?

Public or private nonprofit organizations, including labor organizations, faith-based and other community organizations; institutions of higher education; government entities within states or territories (e.g., cities, counties); Indian Tribes; partnerships and consortia; and intermediaries planning to subgrant funds awarded are eligible to apply. The Corporation encourages organizations that have never received funding from the Corporation or AmeriCorps to apply for the grants described in this *Notice*. Organizations that have been convicted of a Federal crime are disqualified from receiving the assistance described in this *Notice*.

An Indian Tribe is defined as a federally recognized Indian Tribe, band, nation, or other organized group or community, including any Native village, Regional Corporation, or Village Corporation, as defined under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43 U.S.C. § 1602), that the United States Government determines is eligible for special programs and services provided under federal law to Indians because of their status as Indians. Indian Tribes also include tribal organizations controlled, sanctioned, or chartered by one of the entities described above.

III. WHAT ARE THE CATEGORIES OF AMERICORPS STATE AND NATIONAL GRANTS?

The categories of AmeriCorps State and National grants are described below. The Corporation will not provide more than one grant for the same project in one fiscal year. Also see the AmeriCorps State and National Fit Finder to decide which type of grant aligns with the proposed project (<http://www.americorps.gov/fitfinder/>).

A. State and National Competitive

These grants are awarded to organizations that are proposing a project that will operate in only one state and that are put forward to the Corporation by Governor-appointed State* or Territory Commissions; and to organizations that propose to operate AmeriCorps programs in more than one state and apply directly to the Corporation. Applicants are eligible to apply for funding for members' living allowance and program costs.

*Montana Commission on Community Service and the Governor's Office of Community Service

B. State and National Professional Corps

These grants are awarded to organizations that propose to operate a Professional Corps program in a single or multiple states. Professional Corps programs place AmeriCorps members as teachers, health care providers, police officers, engineers, or other professionals in communities where there is an inadequate number of such professionals. Applicants are eligible to apply for funding for a portion of program costs, and use their own or other resources to pay the members' living allowance and additional member costs.



C. States and Territories without Commissions

Applicants in South Dakota, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and the U.S. Virgin Islands apply directly to the Corporation. Applicants are eligible to apply for funds for member support and program costs. State or Territory government entities are not eligible to apply.

D. State and National Education Award Program (EAP) Fixed-amount Grants

Organizations operating in a single state and nominated by Governor-appointed State Commissions and organizations that operate their AmeriCorps program in more than one state may apply. Applicants are eligible to apply for a small fixed-amount grant and use their own or other resources for the members' living allowance and program costs. Applicants can apply for up to \$800 per MSY. There is no match requirement for EAP grants. Unlike Full-time Fixed-amount grants, EAPs may enroll full-time and less-than-full-time members.

E. Full-time Fixed-amount Grants (Non-EAP)

Organizations nominated by Governor-appointed State or Territory Commissions, organizations that operate their AmeriCorps program in more than one state, organizations operating Professional Corps programs, organizations in States and Territories without Commissions, and Indian Tribes may apply to receive a fixed-amount grant. Full-time Fixed-amount grants are available for programs that enroll full-time members only. Applicants apply for a fixed amount per MSY and use their own or other resources for the remaining costs of the program. There is no match requirement for fixed-amount grants, but organizations must still raise the additional funds needed to run the program.

Full-time Fixed-amount grants are only available for new and re-competing applications. Second and third-year continuation applicants must submit a new application if they are interested in a fixed-amount grant. The Corporation reserves the right to consider an applicant's continuation request if its fixed-amount application is not funded.

Full-time Fixed-amount grant applicants in the Education Priority Area will be required to select national performance measures. Applicants proposing non-education programs may select from the national measures or report on their own performance measures. All performance measures will be negotiated prior to grant selection and award. Approved applicants must agree to participate in any relevant evaluations conducted by the Corporation. One such evaluation will be designed to measure the success of this pilot, including whether fixed-amount grants reduce administrative burden on grant recipients.

F. Indian Tribes

The Corporation sets aside 1% of grant funds to support programs operated by Indian Tribes and selected by the Corporation on a competitive basis. Applicants are eligible to apply for funds for members' living allowance and program costs.

IV. WHAT ARE THE MATCH REQUIREMENTS TO APPLY FOR THESE GRANTS? Program requirements, including requirements on match, are specified in the AmeriCorps regulations and summarized below.

A. What are the matching requirements for these grants?

1. Fixed-Amount Grants

There is no match requirement for fixed-amount grants. However, the fixed-amount grant does not cover all costs. Fixed-amount grantees provide the additional resources needed to operate the program, but are not required to track or report on them.

2. Cost Reimbursement Grants (non-fixed-amount)



A first-time successful applicant is required to match at 24 percent for the first three-year funding period. Starting with year four, the match requirement gradually increases every year to 50 percent by year ten, according to the minimum overall share chart found in 45 CFR 2521.60.

Section 121(e)(5) of the National Community Service Act requires that programs that use other federal funds as match for an AmeriCorps grant report the amount and source of these funds to the Corporation on the Federal Financial Report. Indian Tribal Government programs are subject to the same matching requirements. However, in accordance with Executive order 13175, "Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments," the Corporation may expedite approving waivers of matching requirements. Tribal governments that require a waiver must submit a request at least 60 days before the AmeriCorps application is due. For full information on applying for a Tribal waiver, send a request for instructions to TribalMatchWaiver@cns.gov.

B. What are the requirements regarding member living allowance?

The proposed budget must include a living allowance for full-time members that is between \$12,100 (minimum) and \$24,200 (maximum) per member except as noted below.

For cost-reimbursement grants, this amount must be included in the proposed budget. If a program chooses to provide a living allowance to part-time members, it must comply with the maximum limits in the chart below. While Full-time Fixed-amount grant applicants don't submit detailed budgets, they are still required to provide a living allowance to members that complies with the minimum and maximum requirements. Full-time fixed-amount grant applicants are not required to identify that amount in the application.

Table 2: Minimum and Maximum Living Allowance

Service Term	Minimum # of Hours	Minimum Living Allowance	Maximum Total Living Allowance
Full-time	1700	\$12,100	\$24,200
One-year Half-time	900	n/a	\$12,800
Two-year Half-time	900	n/a	\$12,800
Reduced Half-time	675	n/a	\$9,600
Quarter-time	450	n/a	\$6,400
Minimum-time	300	n/a	\$4,300

C. What are the exceptions to the living allowance requirements?

1. Prior to September 21, 1993.

If a program existed prior to the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993 (enacted September 21, 1993), the law does not require a living allowance. If an applicant chooses to offer a living allowance, it is exempt from the minimum requirement of \$12,100, but not the maximum requirement of \$24,200.

2. EAP Fixed-Amount Grantees.

EAP grantees are not required to provide a living allowance, but if a living allowance is provided, it must comply with the maximum requirements set forth in the Living Allowance section above.

3. Professional Corps Grantees

Full-time Professional Corps members must receive a living allowance or salary, which must meet the minimum, but may exceed the maximum living allowance required for other AmeriCorps programs. Professional Corps member salaries are paid entirely by the organizations with which the members serve, and are not included in the budget.



Professional Corps applicants may request funds for other costs, and must meet the regulatory match on these budgeted costs only, unless proposing a fixed-amount grant.

D. What is the Maximum Cost per Member Service Year (MSY)?

The Corporation considers comparative Cost per MSY in funding decisions. Cost per MSY is calculated by dividing the Corporation's share of the budget request by the number of MSYs requested in the application. The cost per MSY does not include child care or the value of the education award a member may earn. The maximum amount an applicant may request from the Corporation per MSY is determined on an annual basis.

Continuation and re-competing grantees requesting a higher cost per MSY than in the previous year must include a compelling rationale for this increased cost in the Budget Adequacy/Cost Effectiveness section of the application narrative. **This applies even if the increased cost per MSY is less than the maximum.**

Table 3: 2011 Maximum Cost per MSY*

*Applications will not be accepted if cost per MSY exceed \$13,300

Grant Program	Maximum
Individual State Program	\$16,000
Average across State Formula, State Competitive, State EAP *	\$13,300
Multi-state (National Direct)	\$13,300
Indian Tribes	\$13,300
Professional Corps	\$2,500
Professional Corps Fixed-Amount Grant	\$2,000
Education Award Program Fixed-Amount Grant	\$800
Full-time Fixed-amount Grant	\$13,000

E. What are the member enrollment requirements for existing grantees?

We expect grantees to enroll the full number of members included in their grant award. Enrollment rates have a direct bearing on the number of slots and the size of awards approved in the continuation and re-compete processes. Applicants that do not fully enroll are likely to receive a decrease in funding. Continuation and re-competing grantees that haven't achieved full enrollment in the previous year must provide an explanation in their application and describe a corrective action plan.

F. What are the member retention requirements for existing grantees?

We recognize retention rates may vary among equally effective programs depending on the program model. We expect grantees to pursue the highest retention rate possible. Retention rates will have a direct bearing on the number of slots and the size of awards approved in the continuation and re-compete processes. Applicants that do not retain members are likely to receive a decrease in funding. Continuation and re-competing grantees that haven't achieved full retention in the most recently completed program year must provide an explanation in their application and describe a corrective action plan.

G. What is the amount of the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award?

AmeriCorps members serving in programs funded with 2011 dollars who successfully complete a term of service will receive an education award from the National Service Trust of \$5,550 for a year of full-time service, with correspondingly smaller awards for less-than-full-time service. The amount of the Education Award is determined



on the basis of the Pell Grant award. A member has up to seven years after the term of service has ended to use the award.

Table 4: Term of Service and Education

Award Term of Service	Minimum # of Hours	Education Award
Full Time	1700	\$5,550
One-Year Half Time	900	\$2,775
Two-Year Half Time	900	\$2,775
Reduced Half Time	675	\$2,114
Quarter Time	450	\$1,468
Minimum Time	300	\$1,175

V. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. How to Apply

Organizations that propose to operate in one state only must apply through the State Commission* for the state in which they will operate. Organizations that propose to operate in more than one state are eligible to apply directly to the Corporation.

Organizations in states and territories without commissions apply directly to the Corporation. Indian Tribes may apply through State Commissions, or directly to the Corporation.

*Montana Commission on Community Service and the Governor's Office of Community Service

B. Notice of Intent to Apply

Applicants are encouraged to send an e-mail by December 15, 2010 to americorpsnational@cns.gov for National applicants or americorpsapplications@cns.gov for State Commissions, stating intent to apply.

Although submission of the Notice of Intent is not mandatory,* submitting it will help the Corporation plan more efficiently for external and internal review. Include the name of the applicant organization, address, contact person, and phone number in the Notice of Intent. National applicants should state category of funding. State Commissions are encouraged to include an estimate of the number of programs planned for submission to the state competitive competition.

*Applicants in Montana are only required to submit a Letter of Intent and Financial Readiness Survey (for new applicants) to the Governor's Office of Community Service by Oct. 13, 2010 at 5pm.

Providing an e-mail address will also allow the Corporation to contact applicants directly if application materials are updated.

C. Universal Identifier

Applications must include a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number and register with the Central Contractor's Registry (CCR). **The DUNS number does not replace an Employer Identification Number.**

DUNS numbers may be obtained at no cost by calling the DUNS number request line at (866) 705-5711 or by applying online at www.dnb.com. The website indicates a 24-hour e-mail turnaround time on requests for DUNS numbers; however, **we suggest registering at least 30 days in advance of the application due date.** Expedited DUNS numbers may be obtained by following instructions found here: <http://smallbusiness.dnb.com/establish-your-business/12334338-1.html>



CCR is the primary registrant database for the U.S. Federal Government. CCR collects, validates, stores, and disseminates data in support of Federal agency contracts, grant awards, cooperative agreements, and other forms of federal assistance. All CNCS recipients and subrecipients are required to maintain a valid registration, which must be renewed annually.

We urge applicants that are not already registered with the CCR to begin the registration process immediately in order to avoid any delays in submitting applications. Applicants must have a DUNS number in order to register with the CCR. It typically takes 3-5 days to finalize CCR registration. To register online go to www.bpn.gov/CCR.

D. Content and Form of Application Submission

1. Submitting in eGrants

The Corporation requires that all applicants submit applications electronically via the Corporation's web-based application system, eGrants. Applications must arrive at the Corporation by January 25, 2011 at 5 p.m. ET in order to be considered.* The Corporation reserves the right to extend the submission deadline. Any notice of such extended deadline will be posted in eGrants.

*To qualify for a grant, applicants must submit their application by Nov. 3, 2010 at 5pm in eGrants for review by the Montana Governor's Office of Community Service (OCS). Final Commission approved versions must be submitted by Jan. 12, 2011 at 5pm in eGrants. OCS will submit all recommended applications to the corporation by Jan. 25, 2011.

We recommend that applicants create an eGrants account and begin the application at least three weeks before the deadline. Applicants should draft the application as a word processing document, then copy and paste the document into eGrants no later than 10 days before the deadline.

Contact the eGrants Help Desk at 888-677-7849 if a problem arises while creating an account, preparing, or submitting an application. Be prepared to provide the application ID. eGrants Help Desk hours are 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. ET Monday through Friday.

If technical issues will prevent an applicant from submitting an application on time, please contact the eGrants Help Desk prior to the deadline to explain the technical issue and receive a ticket number. If the issue cannot be resolved by the deadline, the applicant must continue working with the eGrants Help Desk to submit via eGrants.

2. Late Applications *

The Corporation may consider an application after the deadline, but only if the applicant submits a letter explaining the extenuating circumstance which caused the delay. The letter must be sent to LateApplications@cns.gov within the 24-hour period following the deadline. Late applications are evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

*The Montana Governor's Office of Community Service will not accept late applications. Please call 406-444-9077 if there are issues when submitting to eGrants.

If extenuating circumstances make the use of eGrants impossible, applicants may send a hard copy of the application to the address below in Section X. Agency Contacts, via overnight carrier. Please use a non-U.S. Postal Service because of security-related delays in receiving mail from the U.S. Postal Service. All deadlines and requirements in this *Notice* apply to hard copy applications. Hard copy applications must include a cover letter detailing the circumstances that make it impossible to submit via e-Grants.

Do not submit supplementary materials such as videos, brochures, letters of support, or any other item not requested in these application instructions. The Corporation will not review or return them.

3. Character Limits



In eGrants, applicants will enter text for Section A. Program Design, B. Organizational Capability, C. Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy, and D. Evaluation Plan. **You may not exceed 50,000 characters, or about 25 double spaced pages, in these six sections combined. The character count includes spaces and punctuation.**

E. Coordination among State Commissions* and Multi-state Applicants

The Corporation expects State Commissions and multi-state grantees to consult and coordinate activities at the local level, as specified in Section 131. [42 U.S.C. 12583] of the National Community Service Act (NCSA). This consultation is designed to ensure the most effective use of national service resources and lead to enhanced coordination among grantees. The list of State Commissions can be found here: www.nationalservice.org/about/contact/statecommission.asp.

*Montana Commission on Community Service and the Governor's Office of Community Service

Multi-state applicants and grantees are expected to:

- Consult with the State Commission of each state in which the organization plans to operate **prior to application submission**.
- Provide the State Commission with contact information for multi-state programs in their state **after grants are awarded**, and update these lists on an annual basis.
- Participate in the State Commission's annual needs assessment and training plan development activities, and in the development of their state service plan, as well as appropriate training and other events.
- Include the State Commission on the multi-state grantee's mailing list and invite them to appropriate training and other events.

State Commissions are expected to:

- Consult with the multi-state applicants and grantees that contact them prior to application submission.
- Consider the schedules and needs of multi-state programs in their states when planning annual events and technical assistance activities.
- Include multi-state programs in their annual needs assessment and training plan development activities, and in the development of their state service plan.
- Add AmeriCorps personnel from multi-state programs in their state to their mailing list and invite them to appropriate training and other events.

State Commissions may provide input on multi-state applicants proposing to operate in their state. This input will be provided via eGrants.11

F. Funding Restrictions

Grants under this program, except for fixed-amount and EAP grants, are subject to the applicable Cost Principles under OMB Circulars A-21 (2 CFR part 220), A-122 (2 CFR part 230), or A-87 (2 CFR part 225) and the Uniform Administrative Requirements for grants under A-102 (45 CFR part 2541) or A-110 (45 CFR 2543 or 2 CFR part 21).

G. Equal Opportunity Survey

Applicants are asked to complete the Survey on Ensuring Equal Opportunity for Applicants. Applicants may complete the survey in eGrants while preparing the application for submission or contact the Corporation to obtain a hard copy*.

*Applicants need to complete survey in eGrants before submitting application.

VI. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION



A. What is the selection process for these grants?

In evaluating applications for funding to develop a balanced portfolio, in addition to the six focus areas and strategic objectives identified in Section I, external and staff reviewers (reviewers) will assess program design, organizational capability, and cost-effectiveness and budget adequacy. Additional selection factors will be applied to balance the portfolio with regard to program models, program activities, geographic distribution, and communities served, as described in 45 CFR §§ 2522.450 and 2522.470.

B. Selection Criteria*

Each application must clearly describe a project that will effectively deploy AmeriCorps members to solve a significant community problem.

1. Program Design. (50%)

In assessing Program Design, reviewers will examine the degree to which the applicant clearly describes and convincingly links four major elements: (1) the problem(s) identified, (2) the solution that will be carried out by AmeriCorps members and community volunteers, (3) the ways in which AmeriCorps members are particularly well-suited to deliver the solution, and (4) the anticipated outcomes. Specifically, reviewers will assess the extent to which the applicant:

- Provides persuasive evidence that the identified problem exists in the targeted community(ies).
- Demonstrates that individuals recruited and selected to be AmeriCorps members will:
 - Have the appropriate backgrounds, qualifications and skills to succeed;
 - Receive orientation, training, and supervision to ensure impact in the community, and the necessary support to have a high-quality service experience.
- Makes the case that engaging AmeriCorps members is a highly effective means of solving the identified community problem.
- Describes how the activities in which AmeriCorps members and volunteers will engage will have a measurable impact on the identified community problem.

*Expanded to encompass Montana State Service Plan:

Initiatives:

- Governor's initiative for clean energy
- Governor and First Lady's initiative for math and science

Expectations:

- Disability inclusion in the design and delivery
- Collaborative approach to program planning, design and delivery
- Demonstrate ability to successfully administer an AmeriCorps or other federal grant
- Addressing rural, underserved or areas of extreme poverty that are not currently served by AmeriCorps programs

If a new applicant is already working on the problem identified in the application, the applicant should describe efforts and impact to date and describe how the proposed use of AmeriCorps members will add value, i.e., be more effective than what is currently being implemented, or enhance existing efforts.

2. Organizational Capability (25%)

Reviewers will assess the extent to which:

- The organization has the experience, staffing, and management structure to plan, implement and evaluate the proposed program.
- The organization has secured, or describes an effective plan for securing, the financial and in-kind resources necessary to support program implementation and to demonstrate community stakeholder support
- Multi-state applicants have consulted with state and territory service commissions to ensure non-duplication and coordination of Corporation resources.
- Current or previous AmeriCorps grantees filled the member positions they were awarded and retained the AmeriCorps members they enrolled.



- The organization has a well-developed plan for expanding on its success through expansion or assuring adaptation of its program model by other organizations.

3. Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy (25%)

For cost-reimbursement grants, reviewers will assess the extent to which:

- The budget is clear, reasonable, cost-effective, and in alignment with the program narrative.
- The requested funds do not exceed the maximum cost per Member Service Year (MSY), or for existing programs, have not increased over previous years.

For EAPs and Full-time Fixed-amount grants, reviewers will assess:

- The amount requested per member. Fixed-amount applicants are encouraged to request less than the full maximum amount allowed per MSY. The amount requested is a competitive factor in the selection process.
- The applicant's understanding of total program cost and capacity to raise additional resources beyond the fixed-amount.

C. Review and Selection Process

CNCS anticipates that processing and selecting applications for funding will require five months. The review process will be described in detail in the amended *Notice*.

VII. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

A. When will grants be awarded?

The Corporation will award grants following the grant selection announcement. We anticipate announcing the results of this competition in June 2011.

B. What documents govern the grant?

The AmeriCorps regulations and grant provisions are incorporated in the Notice of Grant Award (NGA). The NGA incorporates the approved application as part of a binding commitment under the grant.

C. What is the Project/Award Period?

The Corporation generally makes grant awards for three years, with funding in annual increments. Grantees will be eligible for continuation funding in the second and third year contingent on the availability of appropriations, compliance, and satisfactory performance. **The project start date may not occur prior to the date the Corporation awards the grant. AmeriCorps members may not begin service prior to the beginning of the member enrollment period as designated in the grant award. A program may not certify any hours a member performs prior to the beginning of the member enrollment period.**

D. What are the reporting requirements for these grants? *

Grantees other than fixed-amount grantees are required to provide annual performance, bi-annual financial reports, and an internal or external evaluation report as required by the AmeriCorps regulations §§2522.500-2522.540 and §§2522.700-2522.740.

*The Governor's Office of Community Service reporting requirements are bi-annual progress reports, monthly expense reports, and quarterly federal financial reports.

Professional Corps programs are required to provide annual program and financial reports only. Fixed-amount grantees are required to provide annual performance reports only. All grantees provide quarterly expense reports through the Payment Management System at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

E. Disaster Funding

The Corporation reserves the right to re-focus program dollars in the event of disaster or other compelling need for service.



VIII. AGENCY CONTACTS

This *Notice* is available at

www.americorps.gov/for_organizations/funding/nofa.asp. The TTY number is 202-606-3472. For further information or for a printed copy of this *Notice*, call (202) 606-7508. For questions regarding multi-state or Indian Tribes applications submitted directly to the Corporation, please call (202) 606-7508 or send an e-mail to americorpsnational@cns.gov. Send questions concerning a single-state application, to americorpsapplications@cns.gov or contact the State Commission*. A list of all State Commissions can be found here:

www.americorps.gov/about/contact/statecommission.asp/. The mailing address is:

Corporation for National and Community Service

ATT: Office of Grants Policy and Operations/ASN Application

1201 New York Avenue NW

Washington, DC 20525

*In Montana, please contact:

Governor's Office of Community Service

PO Box 208001

Helena, MT 59624

Phone: 406-444-9077

Fax: 406-444-4418

Email: serve@mt.gov

Website: <http://serve.mt.gov>

IX. OTHER INFORMATION TO KNOW BEFORE APPLYING

In addition to consulting the *Notice* and AmeriCorps regulations as directed in these instructions, multi-state applicants may also consult the Corporation web site for a schedule of technical assistance conference calls, Frequently Asked Questions, and other resources targeted to multi-state applicants. Applicants in a single state should consult with their State Commission.





Attachment B – Letter of Intent

Montana Governor's Office of Community Service 2011 AmeriCorps State Grant Application

Proposed Project Title: _____

Contact Person: _____

Name of Applicant Organization: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____

E-mail Address: _____ (note – all AmeriCorps programs must have access to the Internet at the time of the program's start date)

Federal Employer Identification No (FEIN): _____

Type of Applicant (nonprofit, government, etc.): _____

Geographic Area to be Served: _____

Amount of Funds Requested and Total Project Budget: _____

Question 1: Brief Description of Program (300 words): _____

Issue Areas - Which federal key objective(s) and/or Montana Initiative(s) will this program address?

Federal Key Objectives: *Note: These key objectives have not yet been finalized by CNCS.*

- ☐ Education: Improve graduation rates for students and improve grade-level performance
- ☐ Healthy Futures: Improve the health and wellness of individuals in the areas of obesity prevention, aging in place and access to health service
- ☐ Environment Stewardship: Decrease the consumption of fossil fuels
- ☐ Veterans: Increase economic, education, and health opportunities for veterans and military families by leveraging national service, including veterans serving veterans



- ☐ Opportunity: Improve financial stability, access to affordable housing, and employment opportunities for economically vulnerable families
- ☐ Disaster Services: Increase capacity of communities to serve vulnerable populations in the event of a disaster and improve communities in disaster-affected areas

Montana Initiatives:

- ☐ The Governor's strategic initiative for clean energy
- ☐ The Governor and First Lady's strategic initiative for math and science education

The Montana Commission on Community Service also has the following expectations of all AmeriCorps Programs:

Montana Expectations of All Programs:

- ☐ Disability inclusion in the design and delivery of the program
- ☐ A collaborative approach to program planning, design and delivery
- ☐ Demonstrated ability to successfully administer an AmeriCorps or other federal grant
- ☐ Addressing rural, underserved or areas of extreme poverty that are not currently served by AmeriCorps programs

Question 2: Describe how your program will address these expectations (max 300 words): _____

AmeriCorps Members

How many Members will be recruited under the proposed program?

_____ Full Time
(1700 hrs)

_____ Half Time
(900 hrs)

_____ Reduced Half Time
(675 hrs)

_____ Quarter Time _____ Minimum Time
(450 hrs) (300 hours)

_____ Total

Thank you for your interest and we look forward to reviewing your proposal!

Please submit a completed letter of intent with the readiness assessment (attachment C) to the Governor's Office of Community Service by October 13, 2010 at 5pm in order to be eligible for a 2011 AmeriCorps Grant.



Attachment C – Readiness Self-Assessment *Only for New Applicants

Is My Organization Ready to Apply for an AmeriCorps Grant?

INTRODUCTION

This Readiness Assessment asks simple questions to help you determine whether your organization is poised to successfully apply for and implement an AmeriCorps grant. Read each question carefully and answer honestly. This assessment is a tool to help you plan for implementation and administration of AmeriCorps grant-funded programming.

Successful completion of the assessment does not guarantee AmeriCorps funding through the Governor's Office of Community Service (OCS) or the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS).

Once you have completed the readiness assessment, please continue with the Financial and Administrative Survey that will be used by the Governor's Office of Community Service to determine if your organization is financially ready for any AmeriCorps Grant.

Regardless of your results, The Governor's Office of Community Service is eager to assist you in designing and implementing services benefiting the residents of Montana. For more information please contact the Governor's Office of Community Service at serve@mt.gov or (406) 444-9077.

Please submit a completed readiness assessment with the letter of intent (**Attachment B**) to the Governor's Office of Community Service on October 13th, 2010 by 5pm in order to be eligible for a 2011 AmeriCorps Grant.



FUNDAMENTAL QUESTIONS

Is your organization a public or private nonprofit organization - including labor organizations, faith-based and other community organizations; an institution of higher education; a government entity within the State of Montana; an Indian Tribe; or a partnership or consortia?

Yes No Unsure

Does your organization's plan for utilizing AmeriCorps members address specific unmet community needs in the areas of education, healthy futures, environmental stewardship, veterans, opportunity, and disaster services? *Note: Key objectives have not yet been finalized by CNCS.*

Yes No Unsure

If the answer to either of the above questions is "No" then your organization would not be eligible to receive an AmeriCorps grant or serve as a Host Site for AmeriCorps members. You are similarly ineligible if your organization is a 501 (c)(4) non-profit entity [under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, 26 U.S.C. 501 (c)(4)] that engages in lobbying.

Do your plans for utilizing AmeriCorps members call for members to provide service exclusively within the state of Montana?

Yes No Unsure

If the answer to the above question is "No" and the other results of this Assessment are favorable, then your organization may be interested in applying directly to the Corporation for National & Community Service for an AmeriCorps*National grant BUT are ineligible to apply to the Governor's Office of Community Service.

If your organization does apply directly to the Corporation for National and Community Service you are required to submit a consultation form to the Governor's Office of Community Service. Please contact the Governor's Office of Community Service for more information.

Administrative Competencies

Does your organization have a proven track record of establishing measurable outcomes with its programs?

Yes No Unsure

Does your organization have the infrastructure to recruit, train, and support the efforts of AmeriCorps members? Variables include office space, technology, supervisory time & skill, financial expertise, and the ability to manage volunteers.

Yes No Unsure

Has your organization previously managed a major federal, state or foundation grant?

Yes No Unsure

Are there formal internal controls governing all financial operations?

Yes No Unsure



Does your organization have sufficient cash to operate a major grant on a reimbursement basis? Both the Federal and State governments rarely, if ever, pay grant funds in advance. Payments are made 30-60 days after submission of invoices by programs.

Yes No Unsure

Are the financial operations of your organization audited annually by an independent auditor?

Yes No Unsure

If you answered "No" to any of the above questions, it is likely your organization would struggle to successfully administer an AmeriCorps grant. Consideration should be given to seeking a partnership with an existing AmeriCorps program in Montana. Serving as an AmeriCorps host site, rather than as a primary grant applicant is often a better option for smaller organizations. Contact the Governor's Office of Community Service for more details.

ORGANIZATIONAL COMPETENCIES

The following questions address key elements of successful organizations. Completion of this portion of the assessment will help provide you with additional information about the capacity and structure in place to operate an AmeriCorps program.

Score this section of the assessment by giving yourself one (1) point for each correct answer.

ORGANIZATIONAL PURPOSE: THE MISSION

1. Does your organization have a clear written mission statement? (if no, skip to question 6)

Yes No Unsure

2. Do ALL organizational programs and efforts align with the mission?

Yes No Unsure

3. Has your organization said no to potentially good opportunities which are not consistent with the organization's mission?

Yes No Unsure

4. Is the mission understood by ALL stakeholders within the organization?

Yes No Unsure

5. Is the mission frequently referred to (e.g. in planning sessions and other meetings)?

Yes No Unsure



ORGANIZATIONAL GOVERNANCE & OPERATIONS

6. Does your organization have an active and independent board of directors and/or other governing body? (Independent is defined as a majority of board members who are neither employees of the organization nor family members of employees or other board members.)

Yes No Unsure

7. Does the organization have written policies and procedures, including a conflict of interest policy for employees and directors?

Yes No Unsure

ORGANIZATIONAL DIRECTION: STRATEGIC PLANNING

8. Does your organization have a clear and coherent written strategic plan for the future (i.e. 3-10 year strategic plan)? (if no, skip to question #13)

Yes No Unsure

9. Does the strategic plan have well defined measurable goals and achievable action steps with timeframes?

Yes No Unsure

10. Are the goals in the strategic plan well known and understood by the staff and board?

Yes No Unsure

11. Is the strategic plan made actionable by realistic and detailed annual plans that outline the specific work to be accomplished?

Yes No Unsure

12. Is this annual plan consistently used at all levels of the organization to guide operations?

Yes No Unsure

13. Does the organization conduct regular assessment of internal operations to assess efficiency and effectiveness?

Yes No Unsure

ORGANIZATIONAL REVENUE: SUSTAINABILITY

14. Does the organization have diversified funding from multiple sources?

Yes No Unsure



ORGANIZATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE: FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

16. Are organizational and programmatic budgets closely and regularly monitored?

Yes No Unsure

17. Does the organization produce and review financial statements at least monthly?

Yes No Unsure

18. Does the organization have a development/fundraising plan in place?

Yes No Unsure

19. Does the organization have plans to secure the financial and in-kind resources to meet required matches?

Yes No Unsure

ORGANIZATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE: TECHNOLOGY

20. Does your organization have computers?

Yes No Unsure

21. Does every key staff member have access to a computer with up-to-date software, internet access, and e-mail capabilities?

Yes No Unsure

22. Are all staff competent and comfortable using their computers?

Yes No Unsure

23. Does your organization have a computerized accounting system?

Yes No Unsure

ORGANIZATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE: HUMAN RESOURCES

24. Does your organization have a well-planned process to recruit, develop, and retain the best employees in accordance with an equal opportunity environment?

Yes No Unsure

25. Does your organization provide staff and volunteers with written job descriptions and the necessary resources to carry out duties appropriately?

Yes No Unsure

26. Does the organization provide relevant and regular training for staff and board members?

Yes No Unsure

27. Are employee performance appraisals conducted on a consistent and fair basis?

Yes No Unsure



28. Does your organization have a well-planned process to recruit, develop, and retain volunteers?
 Yes No Unsure

PROGRAM DESIGN: NEEDS ASSESSMENT & IMPLEMENTATION

29. Does your organization conduct regular assessments of community need?

Yes No Unsure

Date Last Conducted: _____

30. Does your organization analyze and use the results of needs assessments to chart change?

Yes No Unsure

31. Does your organization have the ability to grow and/or create new and innovative programs to meet the needs of the community?

Yes No Unsure

32. Are your organization's programs and services well defined?

Yes No Unsure

33. Does your organization have the ability to close a program that is no longer needed or relevant?

Yes No Unsure

ORGANIZATIONAL IMPACT: MEASURING PERFORMANCE & CONTINUAL IMPROVEMENT

34. Does your organization have a comprehensive well-developed evaluation system used to measure the impact of programs and services?

Yes No Unsure

35. Does your organization conduct regular assessments of existing programs' effectiveness in meeting recipient needs AND identify areas for improvement?

Yes No Unsure

36. Does your organization collect data to measure performance and progress on a continual basis?

Yes No Unsure

37. Is data analyzed, used in program redesign and communicated to stakeholders on a regular basis? (e.g. annual report)

Yes No Unsure

ORGANIZATIONAL OUTREACH: PARTNERSHIP & COLLABORATION

38. Does your organization participate in partnerships with other groups?

Yes No Unsure



39. Have these relationships led to mutually beneficial collaboration?

Yes No Unsure

RESULTS

Count the total number of times you selected “yes” and refer to the chart below to determine your organization’s readiness. Balanced organizations with consistent excellence across organizational competencies tend to be most successful in administering complex grants like AmeriCorps. If your replies to this assessment reveal significant areas of growth, it might be best to address these before pursuing AmeriCorps support.

- **25 - 40 points:** Based on your self-assessment, your organization may have the capacity to successfully operate a government-funded project or program.
- **15 - 24 points:** Based on your self-assessment, your organization may need to make a few improvements in your capacity and planning to independently administer an AmeriCorps grant. Exploring partnerships might be beneficial.
- **Less than 15 points:** Based on your self-assessment, your organization may have a significant need to build its capacity before it is ready to apply for an AmeriCorps grant.

FAITH BASED ORGANIZATIONS

If the conditions below are not acceptable to your organization, government funding is probably not a good option:

- Participation in government funded programs must be open to all who qualify, without regard to religious beliefs.
- No participant in a government funded program may be required to participate in inherently religious activities.
- Government funded positions must not proselytize.
- Government funded programs must be held in a separate place or time from religious activities.



Financial and Administrative Survey

<u>A. General Information</u>	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>
1. Has your organization received a federal grant or cost-type award in the last 2 years? If yes, what is your cognizant federal agency?_____		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attach a schedule showing the total federal dollars awarded to your organization, by granting agency, for the two most recently completed fiscal years. 	<u>Attach schedule</u>	
2. Has your organization been audited by a Certified Public Accounting firm within the past two years?		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If Yes, attach a copy of your most recent audit report. 	<u>Attach audit</u>	
3. Are there established policies related to salary scales, fringe benefits, and travel reimbursement and personnel policies?		
4. If so, would these policies conflict with regulations regarding the AmeriCorps grant or AmeriCorps Members?		
5. Does your organization plan to use existing staff to manage the AmeriCorps program? If so, which position(s)?		
<u>B. Financial Management</u>	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>
1. Do you have a "job cost" or "fund based" accounting system?		
2. Is your organization's accounting system a manual system?		
An automated system?		
A combination of manual and automated systems?		
3. Are entries posted to the general ledger daily?		
Weekly?		
Monthly?		
Other? Please describe:_____		
4. Does the accounting system track completely and accurately the receipt and disbursement of funds by each grant or funding source?		
5. Are common or indirect costs accumulated into cost pools for allocation to projects, contracts and grants?		
6. Does your organization have a federally approved indirect cost rate? If so, please attach.		
7. Does the accounting system provide for the recording of actual grant/contract costs according to categories of your approved budget(s), and provide for complete and current disclosure?		
8. Are time and activity distribution records maintained by funding source and project for each employee to account for total hours (100%) devoted to your organization?		



9. Is your organization familiar with federal cost principles?		
10. Is your organization familiar with procedures for the determination and allowance of costs in connection with federal grants and contracts?		
11. Does your accounting system allow for the recording of "in-kind" contributions?		
12. Does your accounting system allow for cash basis reporting?		
13. If your organization uses accrual basis accounting, are there procedures in place to allow for reconciliation between cash and accrual basis reports?		
C. Internal Controls	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>
1. Are the duties of the bookkeeper/record keeper separate from cash functions (receipts, deposits, check signing/releasing)?		
2. Are checks signed by individual(s) whose duties exclude recording cash received, approving vouchers for payment and the preparation of payroll?		
3. Are purchase approval methods documented and communicated?		
4. Are all accounting entries (both cash and in-kind) supported by appropriate documentation?		
5. Are employee payroll reports supported by appropriately signed documentation (timesheets, leave slips, etc.)?		
6. Are employees who handle funds bonded against loss by reasons of fraud or dishonesty?		



Attachment D – Cover Letter

Montana Commission on Community Service 2011 AmeriCorps State Grant Application

Proposed Project Title: _____

Contact Person: _____

Name of Applicant Organization: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____

E-mail Address: _____ (note – all AmeriCorps programs must have access to the Internet at the time of the program's start date)

Federal Employer Identification No (FEIN): _____

Type of Applicant (nonprofit, government, etc.): _____

Geographic Area to be Served: _____

Amount of Funds Requested and Total Project Budget: _____

Question 1: Brief description and summary of program (max 500 words) *Please use similar content to what is submitted into eGrants:* _____

Issue Areas - Which federal key objective(s) and/or Montana Initiative(s) will this program address?

Federal Key Objectives: *Note: These key objectives have not yet been finalized by CNCS.*

- ☐ Education: Improve graduation rates for students and improve grade-level performance
- ☐ Healthy Futures: Improve the health and wellness of individuals in the areas of obesity prevention, aging in place and access to health service
- ☐ Environment Stewardship: Decrease the consumption of fossil fuels
- ☐ Veterans: Increase economic, education, and health opportunities for veterans and military families by leveraging national service, including veterans serving veterans



- ☐ Opportunity: Improve financial stability, access to affordable housing, and employment opportunities for economically vulnerable families
- ☐ Disaster Services: Increase capacity of communities to serve vulnerable populations in the event of a disaster and improve communities in disaster-affected areas

Montana Initiatives:

- ☐ The Governor's strategic initiative for clean energy
- ☐ The Governor and First Lady's strategic initiative for math and science education

Questions 2: Describe how your program will address these issue areas as outlined in the Federal Key Objectives and Montana Initiatives. (max 500 words) *Note: how well programs address issue areas will be used in the ranking of funding recommendations by the Grant Review Workgroup.*

The Montana Commission on Community Service also has the following expectations of all AmeriCorps Programs:

Montana Expectations of All Programs:

- ☐ Disability inclusion in the design and delivery of the program
- ☐ A collaborative approach to program planning, design and delivery
- ☐ Demonstrated ability to successfully administer an AmeriCorps or other federal grant
- ☐ Addressing rural, underserved or areas of extreme poverty that are not currently served by AmeriCorps programs

Questions 3: Describe how your program will address these expectations (max 300 words):

Indirect Cost Rate:

Applicants that include a federally-approved indirect cost rate amount in their budget must submit the approved indirect cost rate agreement to the Governor's Office of Community Service.

**Please attach the indirect cost rate agreement.*



AmeriCorps Members

How many Members will be recruited under the proposed program?

_____ Full Time
(1700 hrs)

_____ Half Time
(900 hrs)

_____ Reduced Half Time
(675 hrs)

_____ Quarter Time _____ Minimum Time
(450 hrs) (300 hours)

_____ Total

Continuation Applicants Only:

Give a summary of the successes and highlights of your program in the last year. Please consider using information from your progress reports. (max 600 words) _____

Thank you for your interest and we look forward to reviewing your proposal!

Please submit a completed cover letter (attachment D) to the Governor's Office of Community Service by November 3, 2010 at 5pm in order to be eligible for a 2011 AmeriCorps Grant. This is in conjunction to the full application submitted in eGrants by November 3, 2010 at 5pm.

